



US Department  
Of Transportation  
Federal Highway  
Administration

Montana Division  
2880 Skyway Drive  
Helena, Montana 59602

Carl Peil, Preconstruction Engineer  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue  
Helena, MT 59601

Subject: Pipe Cleaning

Dear Mr. Peil:

We have had several discussions in the past on the use of Federal-aid funds to clean culvert pipes on construction projects. Although we have had some concerns over whether these activities are routine maintenance or not, we had left the decision as one that would be made on a project by project basis during project development. Recently we have seen several projects that included cleaning of many pipes, with some of them being small diameter ones that could be accomplished by MDT Maintenance with in house forces.

We have revisited this issue with both the Preconstruction Bureau and the Maintenance Division. To help clear up some misunderstandings of what is eligible, and still meet the needs of both MDT and the traveling public, we would like to offer the following guidance:

Only pipes that are larger than 48" would be eligible for cleaning with federal funds.

Pipe cleaning should not normally be included in preventative maintenance contracts.

All larger pipes, i.e. those greater than 48" in diameter, will still be evaluated on a case by case basis. The decision should be based on the size, location, severity of problem and whether specialized equipment would be needed.

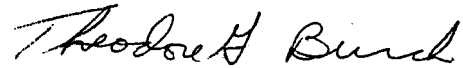
Pipes that would be cleaned as part of the project should be documented as part of the scope of work. This way inclusion in the permitting process and contract could be ensured. Additionally, smaller pipes not eligible could be included in the report as an informational item for Maintenance to schedule cleaning activities.

September 5, 2003

Date Recd Preconst 10/2/03				
Act	Info	MAIL ROUTE	Attach	Initial
	✓	30 Preconst Engr		
	✓	30 Assistant		
		30 Office Mgr		
		31 Safety Mgmt.		
	✓	32 Road Design		
		33 Environment		
	✓	34 Hydraulics		
		35 Survey & Mapping		
	✓	36 Traffic Eng		
	✓	39 Consultant Dsn.		
		John Blacker		
		File		

I hope that this helps to clarify the position of FHWA. Our goal is to continue to provide good drainage on all of our projects, and fix any identified problems that are encountered. This guidance is intended to only address culvert cleaning and not restrict any other work on inlets, outlets or culvert pipes that may be appropriate. If you have any questions or comments feel free to call me at 449-5302 ext. 231.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore G. Burch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'T' and 'B'.

Theodore G. Burch  
Field Operations Engineer

File: 530.4 & 600 tb/lr